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University of Montana–Missoula. Office of University Relations, "UM scholarships established in honor of logging pioneer" (1983). *University of Montana News Releases, 1928, 1956-present*. 8394.
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MEDIA RELEASE

braun/vsl
11/16/83
state + western Montana
weeklies, w/pic

UM SCHOLARSHIPS ESTABLISHED IN HONOR OF LOGGING PIONEER
MISSOULA--

A scholarship program established in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Aaron M. "Ernie" Mikalson, longtime residents of Eureka and pioneers in Montana's timber industry, will provide \$8,000-\$10,000 annually for students majoring in forestry and business at the University of Montana.

Students living in Lincoln and Flathead Counties--Eureka, Kalispell, Thompson Falls, Libby, Troy, Whitefish, Bigfork and Columbia Falls--will be given special consideration. Scholarships will be awarded in amounts up to \$1,000 and will be given to five to 10 students annually.

The scholarship program was set up by Mikalson's children, Mrs. and Mrs. Arthur J. (Bess Gray) Mikalson and Mr. and Mrs. Normal L. (Mabel Lewis) Mikalson, all of Spokane.

To qualify for the scholarships, students must be attending the University full time, be in good academic standing and demonstrate financial need. Scholarships will be awarded to students majoring in forestry with a minor in business or those majoring in business with a minor in forestry.

In addition, a \$500 scholarship to UM will be awarded annually to the third or fourth highest scholar graduating from Lincoln County High School regardless of the student's academic major.

According to Mikelson's son Norman, the scholarships are being made available to further his father's spirit of entrepreneurship and logging philosophy, a

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UM scholarships established--add one

philosophy that seeks to ensure mature trees for future generations to log.

Ernie Mikalson was born in 1881 near Hudson, Wis., and came west to Great Falls in 1900. He became a partner in a sawmill in the Flathead Valley owned by John Rhodes and married Rhodes' sister, Eva. When she died, shortly after the birth of their second son, Evan, Mikalson went on to homestead in the Tobacco Valley. There he built a water-powered sawmill and operated it until a larger sawmill, the Eureka Lumber Company, which for several years was the largest in the state, caused him to sell his mill and start a general merchandise store.

Mikalson sold his sawmill and started a general merchandise store in Eureka. A civic-minded person, he helped form the Eureka Chamber of Commerce, was chief of the volunteer fire department, and served on the first Eureka School Board.

In 1910 he married Hallie Lillard, formerly of Kentucky, who also was among the homesteaders settling the Tobacco Plains. Their son, Norman, was born in 1911.

In 1919 Mikalson purchased and rebuilt another sawmill which was destroyed by fire in 1923. Together with John Schwarder, he rebuilt the mill with a greater capacity and named it the Glen Lake Lumber Company.

Mikalson was a pioneer of new equipment and techniques in the logging industry. In the 1920s he discontinued using horse-drawn logging trucks and began logging with gasoline-powered trucks. He was among the first to use portable tie mill units mounted on skids so when the skidding distance was too far, the mill could be moved quickly to the uncut trees. He also was one of the first in his industry to see the value of doing "selective" rather than clear cutting.

After the crash of '29, Mikalson moved to Spokane. He stayed out of the lumber business until 1942 when his sons, Arthur and Norman, bought a mill in Spokane. In 1946 the Mikalsons, with Charles Weiss and Jim Ramage, both of

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UM scholarships established--add two

Spokane, formed the Columbia Lumber Co. They purchased a larger mill on Roosevelt Lake near Kettle Falls, Wash., where Mikalson served as manager until his death in 1947.

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